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Teen musicians in drug treatment win 2012 GRAMMY[®] experience
NIH, MusiCares[®] and GRAMMY Foundation[®] hail teen artists during Nat'l Drug Facts Week

Two teens with powerful stories about their experience in drug treatment have been awarded the top distinction in the MusiCares[®] and GRAMMY Foundation's[®] Teen Substance Abuse Awareness through Music Contest. The annual contest was created to celebrate National Drug Facts Week and is coordinated by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), part of the National Institutes of Health.

The contest was open to teens ages 14-18. Entrants were asked to compose or create an original song and/or music video that explores, encourages, and celebrates a healthy lifestyle or accurately depicts a story about drug abuse. Composers of all three winning entries will have the opportunity to attend the 54th Annual GRAMMY Awards Backstage Experience[®], a special backstage tour while artists rehearse for the live GRAMMY Awards[®] show early in 2012. NIDA partnered with MusiCares[®] and the GRAMMY Foundation[®], the two nonprofit organizations of The Recording Academy[®], to raise awareness about drug abuse.

"This innovative contest has once again brought the music education mission of the GRAMMY Foundation[®] and the addiction recovery mission of MusiCares[®] to teens across America," said Neil Portnow, president/CEO of the GRAMMY Foundation[®], MusiCares[®], and The Recording Academy[®]. "We received even more entries this year than last, and were impressed with the power and honesty of their lyrics. All entrants are to be congratulated, and we encourage them to keep making music."

The first place winners, Harvie and Amanda, are two teens currently in treatment¹ at the Phoenix House Academy in Los Angeles. Their entry, an original song entitled "Like a Phoenix in the Air," chronicles their feelings about being teens in drug treatment and their desire to rise above their addictions "even with a broken wing." The song ends with the lyrics "Cuz I may fall one hundred times before I sleep, but I promise you I'll get back up tomorrow."

"The winning song reflects the hope that treatment brings, especially to young people who have so much potential to change their life course," said NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow. "This songwriting team brought incredible emotion to their personal journey that hopefully will encourage others to seek treatment for substance abuse problems."

¹ The full names of the first place winners are withheld for confidentiality purposes. Their song, however, can be heard at: <http://drugfactsweek.drugabuse.gov/contestwinners.php>.

The second place winner also created his song while in treatment. Kevin Simmons wrote “My Life” while at the Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations, a residential center in Spokane Valley, Wash., that makes the “self revealing nature” of music and poetry part of treatment. Kevin told his story of addiction and recovery through powerful lyrics that included, “My life was over until I got sober, but I found another way to get through life.” In a video essay, Kevin added that “Whenever I have a bad day I go to my room with a pencil and paper and write down how I feel.”

The third place winner is 14-year-old Grant Davis, a student at Silver State High School in Carson City, Nev. In his entry, “Just a Child,” the young lyricist referenced his experience growing up in a family dominated by his older sister’s struggle with addiction. He created a haunting but hopeful composition that included the lyrics, “You were not supposed to be in charge of the world created for me.”

In addition to the backstage experience at a GRAMMY® rehearsal, the winners will have their musical entries posted on the GRAMMY 365® and MTV websites, as well as on the Above the Influence campaign site sponsored by the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign—a program of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. The winners will receive a small cash award from the Visions Adolescent Treatment Center in Malibu, Calif., and a certificate from NIDA acknowledging their role in the dissemination of health information about substance abuse.

MusiCares® and the GRAMMY Foundation® provided a panel of judges that included musical artists, while NIDA provided technical expertise in the judging process. Points were given for accurate depictions of subject matter. The winning entries can be seen and heard at: <http://drugfactsweek.drugabuse.gov/contestWinners.php>. Follow what NIDA's doing for National Drug Facts Week on Twitter with [@NIDANews](#) or [#DrugFacts2010](#).

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Established in 1989 by The Recording Academy®, MusiCares® provides a safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need. MusiCares® services and resources cover a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies, and each case is treated with integrity and confidentiality. MusiCares® also focuses the resources and attention of the music industry on human service issues that directly impact the health and welfare of the music community. For more information, please visit www.musicares.org.

The GRAMMY Foundation® was established in 1989 to cultivate the understanding, appreciation and advancement of the contribution of recorded music to American culture — from the artistic and technical legends of the past to the still unimagined musical breakthroughs of future generations of music professionals. The Foundation accomplishes this mission through programs and activities that engage the music industry and cultural community as well as the general public. The Foundation works in partnership year-round with its founder, The Recording Academy®, to bring national attention to important issues such as the value and impact of music and arts education and the urgency of preserving our rich cultural heritage. For more information, please visit www.Grammyfoundation.org.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world's research on the health aspects of drug abuse and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to inform policy and improve practice. Fact sheets on the health effects of drugs of abuse and information on NIDA research and other activities can be found on the

NIDA home page at www.drugabuse.gov. To order publications in English or Spanish, call NIDA's Drug*Pubs* research dissemination center at 1-877-NIDA-NIH or 240-645-0228 (TDD) or fax or email requests to 240-645-0227 or drugpubs@nida.nih.gov. Online ordering is available at <http://drugpubs.drugabuse.gov>. NIDA's media guide can be found at <http://drugabuse.gov/mediaguide/>.

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